

Seventy years ago, Senator William Fulbright established this program for the “promotion of international goodwill through the exchange of students in the fields of education, culture and science.” The Fulbright Program receives funding each year with strong bipartisan support from Congress and is also supported by 50 binational commissions worldwide.

Since its establishment, the Fulbright Program has become the United States’ flagship educational exchange program. There have been more than 370,000 participants from around the world and all 50 States since the program was established. Fulbright alumni include 33 heads of state, 54 Nobel laureates, and 82 Pulitzer Prize winners.

The Institute for International Education has administered the Fulbright Program since 1946 and has worked closely with the Department of State to ensure that the Fulbright Program is one of the most prestigious and effective international exchange programs in the world.

The Fulbright Program makes a significant contribution to the exchange of ideas, knowledge, and understanding between Americans and people worldwide. It awards 8,000 grants annually, including to 1,600 U.S. students, 4,000 foreign students, 1,200 U.S. scholars, and 900 visiting scholars, in addition to several hundred teachers and professionals.

Increasingly, it seems as if the world is being torn apart by intolerance, hatred, violence, and isolationism. I am convinced that academic and cultural exchange programs, like Fulbright, are more relevant today than ever because they provide a strong antidote to these trends. Exchanges between individuals from around the world who share ideas and work together on issues and problems confronting the world can build relationships that endure for a lifetime.

I congratulate the Fulbright Program, the alumni, and all who have supported the program for 70 years of promoting international goodwill, and I thank Senator BOOZMAN for this resolution.

TRIBUTE TO DR. WILLIAM GLEN HOWLAND

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, after 17 years spent protecting Lake Champlain, Dr. William Glen Howland—Bill, to most of us—will retire this month as the director of the Lake Champlain Basin Program. We should all thank him and recognize his contributions to the conservation and restoration of Vermont’s jewel, Lake Champlain, credit him for his many contributions to scientific research, and thank him for his commitment to the local community in which he lives and works.

Under Bill’s steady and thoughtful guidance, the Lake Champlain Basin Program, LCBP, has flourished in its mission to coordinate and fund work

by Vermont, New York, and Quebec to protect Lake Champlain’s water quality, fisheries, wetlands, wildlife, recreation, and cultural resources. At the Gordon Center House on Vermont’s Grand Isle, Bill has assembled and guided a team of exceptional scientists and dedicated public servants. Bill has led the Lake Champlain Basin Program to become nationally and internationally recognized in the fields of ecosystem monitoring, prevention of the spread of invasive species, water pollution control, cultural heritage resource interpretation and protection, and public education. It is a model to which other watershed and basin programs aspire.

I have often looked to Bill for his expert advice in developing and implementing Federal legislation and programs. Bill worked with me on the Daniel Patrick Moynihan Lake Champlain Basin Program Act of 2002, the Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership Act adopted in 2006, and the Lake Champlain Ecosystem Restoration Authority, which was adopted as part of the Water Resources Development Act. Bill has testified more than once before Senate committees about the importance of environmental conservation programs and projects in the Lake Champlain and Great Lakes regions.

I have been impressed by Bill’s ability to bring all types of partners to the table, including local citizens, recreation organizations, heritage organizations, county planning offices, the Governors of Vermont and New York, Federal agencies, and even the Premier of Quebec. Bill’s greatest skill may be diplomacy, considering he has confirmed trilateral Memoranda of Understanding with New York, Vermont, and Quebec in 2000, 2003, and 2010, has helped to guide two International Joint Commission inquiries, and has contributed to international trans-boundary conservation work through LAKENET, UNESCO HELP, and NANBO international lake summits. Remarkably, year after year, he has been able to achieve consensus on the allocation of millions of dollars in Lake Champlain funds among multiple Federal agencies, Vermont, New York, many private organizations, and countless partners on the ground.

Bill’s dedication to protecting Lake Champlain and the environment extends well beyond his tenure as director of the LCBP. During his many years as a faculty member and as a member of the research staff at Middlebury College, the University of Vermont, and McGill University, Bill has advanced the field of geography, particularly biophysical remote sensing and terrain modeling of northern ecosystems, which are critical tools as we track global climate change. He has been a role model and adviser to many young scientists, helping to shape their studies and their careers. He also served as the executive director of the Green Mountain Audubon Society for 5

years, before taking the reins at the LCBP.

Like so many great Vermonters, Bill’s service to his local and regional community has been remarkable. Many of Bill’s neighbors owe their health and well-being to his decades of service as an advanced emergency medical technician on the Richmond and Grand Isle rescue squads. Bill has been an active board member of the Lake Champlain Committee and served on the Burlington Barge Canal Superfund panel, receiving a U.S. EPA Environmental Merit Award in 1997.

Director Howland has my sincere gratitude for his years of dedicated service to his local community, to the Lake Champlain Basin, and all of Vermont, as well as to U.S. national and international conservation efforts and scientific research. I expect and hope that he will stay active on all of these fronts. Bill has much more to contribute. I wish him well in his retirement, and I hope that he and his wife, Betsy, will now get a chance to relax on the shores of Lake Champlain at their home in Isle La Motte.

TRIBUTE TO POLLY NICHOL

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to recognize the achievements and contributions of a remarkable advocate and a celebrated leader in my home State of Vermont.

Later this month, Polly Nichol will retire from her position as director of housing of the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. For more than 35 years, Polly’s career in affordable housing and community development has stood as the gold standard of excellence to those in her field. Her effective leadership across Vermont has inspired countless new collaborations, new housing opportunities for our most vulnerable, and the preservation of historic structures that make up Vermont’s unique character. It is not an exaggeration to say that the quality of life for many in the Green Mountains is greater as a result of Polly Nichol’s legacy.

Polly joined the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board in 1988 as its first director of housing. There, she became known for establishing creative partnerships to bring together developers, preservationists, and advocates alike. This work was grounded in her prior experience at the local community action agency, where she led the establishment of two neighborhood reinvestment groups in nearby Barre and Randolph. These groups are now part of NeighborWorks America, a program I have long supported for its investments in rural communities across the country.

Polly’s career in advocacy and leadership has been vast and multifaceted. In Vermont, the challenge of securing safe, affordable housing is far too familiar for many. Overcoming this challenge requires a strong network of advocates and experts ready and willing

to collaborate. During her tenure at the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, Polly has channeled the organization's mission to improve the capacity of surrounding nonprofits dedicated to housing and conservation. Today Vermont's landscape of nonprofit developers and preservationists is uniquely integrated, much thanks to Polly's early efforts to instill value in the belief that building homes includes building community.

Polly's vision has also had a direct impact on thousands of Vermonters in nearly every corner of the state. Her leadership has contributed to the success of the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board as it has invested in and developed more than 12,000 homes and apartments. More than 1,300 homes with much-needed services and supports have also been developed for our most vulnerable friends and neighbors. Throughout, the organization has also enabled more than 1,000 individuals to become homeowners, further enabling them to become integrated within their local communities.

Polly's leadership and advocacy may also be witnessed in the other voluntary roles she has held throughout the last four decades. She is an active member of the city of Montpelier's Housing Task Force, the Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition, and is well known for her role as a founding board member of the Vermont Community Loan Fund. Her reach also extends to other important causes, including a most recent appointment to serve as the vice president of the board of Vermont Works for Women, an organization that supports disadvantaged women and those who pursue nontraditional careers.

We have also been fortunate to have Polly as a delegate to our region and national affordable housing communities, including the New England Housing Network and the Housing Assistance Council. In 1994, Polly received the Skip Jason Community Service Award from the Housing Assistance Council after being nominated by a host of Vermonters. As a leading national advocate for rural housing policy in the country, this award recognizes those whose efforts have improved the housing conditions of the rural poor in their communities and whose work "in the trenches" often goes unrecognized in their communities. Since then Polly's leadership, has continued, as she has served as both president and chair of the board of the Housing Assistance Council.

Polly has been well known to friends and colleagues as much for her gentle humor as her uncompromising dedication to preserve the unique beauty and quality of life found at home in Vermont. Her work will leave a lasting impression on those of us who have been fortunate enough to learn from and work alongside her. As she transitions to retirement, I do hope she finds opportunity to revel in her accomplishments both near and far.

HOLY AND GREAT COUNCIL OF THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the historic events taking place in Crete, Greece. Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople has called the first Holy and Great Council of the various Christian Orthodox churches around the world since 787 CE.

The Holy and Great Council is the first meeting of its kind in over a millennium. The 14 Orthodox Christian Churches together have over 300 million followers around the world, including over a million Americans. These churches are self-governing but united by common dogma, faith, liturgy, and moral conviction, with the Ecumenical Patriarch serving as the "first among equals."

This meeting began on Sunday, June 19 and will continue through June 26. Three hundred and fifty leaders are attending this meeting where they will promote unity among the world's Orthodox believers. They will discuss key issues facing Orthodox Christians, including the church's mission in today's world, the Orthodox diaspora, and the relationship of Christian Orthodoxy with the rest of the Christian world.

The Patriarch has a record of reaching out and working for peace and reconciliation among all faiths and has fostered dialogue among Christians, Jews, and Muslims. His All-Holiness has received awards from the United Nations, the United States, and other nations for providing moral leadership throughout modern history's greatest tests. His efforts to convene this Holy and Great Council is a testament to his continued leadership at a time when it is greatly needed. After the September 11, 2001, attacks, the Patriarch organized a gathering of religious leaders, including Muslim imams, to condemn the attacks as an anti-religious act. He was also the first Ecumenical Patriarch to attend the inauguration of a pope.

With so much suffering taking place around the world, we need people to come together, like they are in this historic meeting, to work together to advance our shared values. I commend and thank Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew for convening this Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Christian Churches in Crete, Greece.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, once again, Greece, the home of democracy, the home of the fundamental principle of religious freedom that democracy has come to represent here in America, is making history, this time on the Island of Crete where Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople is leading a meeting of Orthodox Christian Churches, the Holy and Great Council, that occurs only once in a millennium. In fact, it has not happened since 787 CE, but it is happening now.

The 3 million Orthodox Christians across America, from all 14 national jurisdictions around the world with the

largest number affiliated with the Greek Orthodox Church—the Church of the convener of the Council—Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, are following this historic gathering with great anticipation.

It is the charge of the Holy and Great Council to deal with internal church matters, but Orthodox Christians are also deeply concerned with the opportunity this historic event presents for a wider ranging conversation about not only process within the confines of religion, but the prospects for peace and prosperity it represents for all members of the church and for all people around the world.

Orthodox Christians in America come from all walks of life and represent all opinions and points of view. They include personalities well-known to all of us in this Chamber and beyond: ABC journalist and host of "Good Morning America," George Stephanopoulos; Huffington Post creator Arianna Huffington; and sportscaster Bob Costas. In the political world, they include former Governor of Massachusetts and Democratic nominee for President Mike Dukakis; Hillary Clinton's campaign chairman and former chief of staff to President Bill Clinton, John Podesta; and current Members of Congress—Representative DINA TITUS of Nevada and NIKI TSONGAS of Massachusetts, as well as Congressmen JOHN SARBANES of Maryland and GUS BILIRAKIS of Florida.

These are all respected, talented, accomplished Orthodox Christians whose faith and opinions are represented at the historic convocation of the Holy and Great Council. They are among the more than 1 million Greek Orthodox Americans who are led by their spiritual head, Archbishop Demetrios, who presides over seven metropolitans with regional jurisdictions that serve on the local Holy Synod. The archbishop and his predecessors have played a prominent role in American life, culture, and history that has been part of the fabric of this Nation. We all remember the famous civil rights march in Selma, AL, led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., but we may not remember that at the march was also the late Archbishop Lakovos, marching shoulder-to-shoulder with Dr. King.

Greek Americans, hailing from 500 churches across this Nation, including many in my home State of New Jersey, believe deeply that this Holy and Great Council is a fateful gathering that can have a dramatic impact on their religion and civilization for 1,000 more years, that the council's deliberations will hold great meaning and great promise for a better life for all of us, for peace on this planet, and for the greater good of generations to come. They know and we in this Chamber know that the importance of Orthodox Christians will be measured not by the history made in Crete at this meeting, but the history Orthodox Christians around the world have already made.

I join all of my colleagues in hoping for a successful and productive once in